MY GUEST—H. P. BLAVATSKY

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BY

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FOREWORD

FRANCESCA ARUNDALE was a very striking personality in her quiet way. She was utterly devoted to the cause of Theosophy from the moment she realized what Theosophy stood for. And here we must not forget to add the name of her mother, who is constantly mentioned by Colonel Olcott in his letters as " dear old grandmother ". Sufficient is said by Miss Arundale in the pages that follow to give a general idea of her earlier life as a young woman. Her mother, Mrs. Mary Anne Arundale, was a daughter of H. Pickersgill, R. A., and mother and daughter were therefore closely in touch with artistic circles. Mrs. Arundale, whom I knew during the last three years of her life, used to do a great deal of copying of the late Italian Masters. Her husband was a great traveller, and there is a picture of him in Arabian dress, which he assumed on certain occasions during his travels.

How very early the sterling pure nature of Miss Arundale was noted by the Masters is shown in the marginal note appended by the Master K. H. to the letter which Miss Arundale wrote in 1882 to H. P. B. when renewing her subscription to *The Theosophist* (*Appendix* A). That forecast of the Master concerning Miss Arundale was justified by her whole life. To the day of her death she was a firm adherent both of Theosophy and of the Theosophical Society.

Miss Arundale was deeply devoted to India, and in her mother's home and in her own later, gave ever a warm welcome to such Indians as came to her for assistance or guidance. I shall always feel a deep debt of gratitude to Miss Arundale because she enabled me to meet the expenses of my first two years at Cambridge. When her nephew George S. Arundale was to go to Cambridge, Miss Arundale also went and took a house there, and offered me a home during term time if I cared to stay with her. This invitation naturally reduced my expenses considerably, and enabled me to go to College. This arrangement lasted two years, and during the period I lived in her house I came into

very close contact with her. My studies were of Law and Sanskrit, and Miss Arundale, who had studied just a little Sanskrit in earlier years, joined me, and we attended together the various classes in Sanskrit which were on the syllabus of studies. As her earlier training as a girl had been somewhat deficient, she found study hard, and Sanskrit was not an easy thing for her, though her devotion to it never flagged. Week after week we used to attend the classes of Professor Cowell at his house, on the Rig Veda, Raghuvamsa and Panini.

Naturally Miss Arundale's name will always be closely associated with that of her nephew, George S. Arundale. He was the third son of a younger sister, and his mother died in childbirth. Miss Arundale adopted the little boy and gave him her own name and devoted herself to him. As will be seen in her story, little George Arundale often appears in her narrative, as he was always with her.

When in 1902 her nephew volunteered to come out to India to help Dr. Annie Besant in her educational schemes at Benares, Miss Arundale also came at the same time. Miss Arundale was very English in some ways, in spite of her

deep attachment to Indian philosophy; it required much sacrifice on her part to become used to the bare rooms and cold floors and such other discomforts in the life of North India which the Indian takes for granted as natural, but which are most trying to the European. She was always desirous of helping in every possible way, and so began a work, which in its inception was insignificant, but has since grown into a great undertaking. In one corner of her sitting-room in Shanti Kunj, Miss Arundale began a small class with 5 Indian girls. That little class grew till there arose a Girls School, and this Girls School has since grown until it is to-day the Women's College of Benares, with courses of study leading to the B.A. Degree.

I can recall no person who came into contact with Miss Arundale but always had the kindliest feeling towards her because of her innate gentleness. From long living in India she saw much of certain Indian conditions, and to some extent her devotion to Indian customs waned, but never her intense love and devotion to Indian philosophy, nor to the great Indian Masters of the Wisdom who represented to her India at her best.

Her life was a noble life, constantly forgetful of herself in the service of a Great Work, and I am glad as an old friend to write these few lines as a testimony to one whom I have admired ever since I knew her.

C. JINARAJADASA

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MY GUEST—H. P. BLAVATSKY

CHAPTER I

FROM SPIRITUALISM TO THEOSOPHY

To one who has almost arrived at the allotted three score years and ten of the Psalmist, there is no more enjoyable and, I would venture to say, profitable occupation than a review of the past. The more truly is this so, if our good karma has led us into connection with a great Movement and with the leaders of that Movement, who from their very position have had to endure the glare of notoriety and the fire of scathing criticism.

One thing very necessary to remember is that passing events rarely command a true judgment ; it is only from the vista of distance that the

proportions of light and shade can be accurately gauged, and it is not till we have ascended the hill of time that the pathway can be seen in its totality. Present events often bring with them a glamour which prevents their true value from being realised, and at the same time many of the most deplored incidents of the present, show themselves, from the standpoint of the future, as important factors in the growth and unfoldment of the work.

This is pre-eminently true of the Theosophical Society ; and in the early days when one untoward event after another seemed to threaten the very existence of the Movement, and we exclaimed : " This surely will be the death of the Society," we have seen later that phœnix-like it has risen to new life from its very wounds, and become the stronger from the blows it has endured.

As I have been asked to give my personal reminiscences of the early days of the Theosophical Society, I feel that I cannot well enter upon these without touching slightly on the causes that led me to it.

In the May number of *The Theosophist* (1917) there is an account by Mrs. Besant of the

rising of the Spiritualistic Movement, and how it was used in the early days of the Theosophical Society to draw attention to after-death conditions, and to stem the spread of Materialism, particularly in the West. The Yucatan Brotherhood had given to the world demonstrations of a power outside and beyond the physical, and a wave of spiritualistic phenomena was drawing the attention of many observant people in America as well as in England and France. In one of our visits to this latter country, my mother and I became acquainted with a very ardent Spiritualist, and we had several séances of a remarkable character at his house. An uncle, Mr. Pickersgill, of a very sceptical mind, had also peculiar and personal experiences on the voyage from America to England. We determined to form a small group for the purpose of investigating the phenomena which had presented themselves before us, and a lady friend proving a good medium, we had weekly séances of a very interesting character. As we had at the beginning taken up the study of Spiritualism in France, we had naturally drifted into the Allan Kardec school of philosophy, and the theory of

reincarnation was an integral part of our spiritualistic conceptions.

For six or seven years we continued as Spiritualists to have constant intercourse with the so-called dead, and there is no form of manifestation of spirit influence with which we were not familiar, nor were there any of the well-known mediums who did not come for private séances to our house. Tests which could not have been applied at public séances frequently occurred ; members of my own family returned and materialised sufficiently clearly for me to recognise them. Once, when Mr. G. S. Arundale was an infant, I went to a trance séance of a Mr. Fletcher, leaving my mother with the child, and entered the lecture hall quite unknown to those present. The medium had recently come to England as a trance speaker, and I went on the spur of the moment to hear him. I there received a direct message from Mr. Arundale's mother, giving names and particulars, saying that the spirit entity had just visited our house and seen the child, and that all would be well with him.

I do not say that in all cases these phenomena would bear the searching tests of a Psychical

Research Society. There is no one who has made a careful study of the manifestations of the Spiritualistic Movement but must be aware of the strange uncertainties and many deceptions, not only on the part of the medium, but also on the part of the manifesting intelligences. I can recall séances in which I knew deception had been practised, but it sometimes curiously happened that the very deception itself proved to be a test, because it so conclusively proved that the manifestation did not come from the medium, but came from a force external and outside, whatever the intelligence of the manifesting entity might be. During the seven years that we spent in these investigations, we became familiar with phenomena of all kinds, direct writing through slate, materialisations through Eglinton, Hearn, Williams, and many others whose names I have now forgotten, apports and disintegrations, and the appearance of the manifesting entity and the medium at the same time ; most of these took place in our own home where the possibility of trickery was to a very large extent eliminated.

I do not now remember when I joined the British National Association of Spiritualists, but

I do remember, in March, 1881, having had the temerity to read a paper on Reincarnation before the orthodox English Spiritualists of that Society. This paper was the cause of a very wordy warfare in the columns of the journal *Light*, Dr. George Wyld and some others attacking the doctrine most violently. It had, however, one good effect for me, for happening to mention that I agreed most emphatically with a threefold division of man into body, soul and spirit, this drew the attention of that very advanced lady, Dr. Anna Kingsford, to the paper, and she wrote to me asking if I would like to attend a series of lectures which she was about to give at her own house. These lectures were afterwards published in book form under the title *The Perfect Way : or the Finding of Christ.* There was much in those lectures that led me a step onward, in my quest for truth, towards a fuller conception of the mystery of the Divine Unfoldment in man, and however much I now realise that those lectures were but a preparation for future teaching, and that, from the point of view of Theosophy, much may have been incomplete and even erroneous, I cannot but be very grateful both to Dr. Anna Kingsford and

Mr. Edward Maitland, her collaborator, for the help and instruction those lectures and discussions afforded.

There was another very important way in which I benefited by coming into contact with Dr. Anna Kingsford. She was an ardent, I might almost say a violent, vegetarian. I remember how, when she came to stay with us once, she brought a little guinea-pig which was her particular pet, rather than a dog or cat, because of its vegetarian proclivities. We had many talks on the subject of non-meat eating, and she convinced both my mother and myself that flesh-eating was cruel and unnecessary. We became vegetarians, but I cannot say that we showed much discrimination in our choice of nutriment to begin with, boiled cabbage and greens and potatoes replacing a more succulent diet. But we persevered and soon learnt how to prepare a more appetising menu, and although now and then I have relapsed, yet I have followed a vegetarian diet from that time.

In the beginning of 1881, there was a very remarkable medium who was then holding private séances in London. I do not remember how we became acquainted with Mrs. Hollis-

Billing, but I have a very clear remembrance of the weekly séances we had with her. My readers will say that I must have lived in the séance room, and to a great extent it is true ; the complex nature of the manifestations, the difficulty of discriminating between truth and falsehood, of avoiding credulity and self-deception, made constant and unremitting experience necessary. Mrs. Hollis-Billing was a friend of Madame Blavatsky, although I did not know it at the time, and she is mentioned by Colonel Olcott in his *Old Diary Leaves* ; many of the occurrences in these and other séances were only to be understood in the light which Theosophy afterwards shed upon them.

The séances with Mrs. Hollis-Billing were unique, and I regret very much that, in the course of my wanderings, I have lost a book of notes which I took of them. The manifesting "spirit guide" was called "Ski," and interesting and valuable philosophical instruction was given through him. We were a very private party, my mother and myself, Mr. and Mrs. Edmond W. Wade, Madame Isabel de Steiger, Mrs. Susannah Brewerton and some others whose names have now passed

from my memory. We used to meet and sing a few of the usual spiritualistic songs, and then after a few minutes' silence we heard the voice of "Ski," who generally addressed each one of us by name, giving a friendly greeting to each. As Mrs. Hollis-Billing had been with Madame Blavatsky, it is not astonishing that the spirit guides manifesting through her displayed a knowledge of philosophy and occultism which, although I did not then know it, was based on Theosophical teachings and was very different from the usual mediumistic utterances. Sometimes materialistic phenomena occurred. An empty frame was placed upon an easel with a little loose drapery behind it, and a living portrait of a friend or relative of a sitter would gradually materialise within the picture-frame. What made the greatest impression, however, upon myself and most of the sitters was the strange and sometimes weird stories which purported to be past lives of various individuals. These were given through Mrs. Billing by "Ski," and I well remember an Egyptian life, the story of which held me spellbound; and the relation of the events which I was said to have passed through

filled me with a strange emotion, which I can still recall, although the facts given have faded from my memory.

These lives may or may not have been seen clearly and truly, but I feel convinced that some glimpses came to us, and that "Ski" was able to read in our auras some slight history of our past.

One day, after we had been attending these séances for some time, Mrs. Brewerton, with whom I had become very intimate, said to me: "I think, Miss Arundale, I am justified in speaking to you about the Theosophical Society, and that you are a fit and proper person to become a member if you wish." I told her I knew nothing of the Theosophical Society, and she then explained a little about it. The call came, and we answered it, and both my mother and myself sent in our applications and became members of the Society; but I was far from realising the momentous step which I was taking, a step which, however much I may have failed in my duties as a true Theosophist, has nevertheless led me to that path which I trust will, life by life, bring me nearer to the Supreme Goal.

CHAPTER II

EARLY IMPRESSIONS OF THEOSOPHY

IT is often said that the only condition required for entry into the Theosophical Society is the acceptance of the First Object. This is so, but I know that in my own case this First Object was not that which drew me into the Society. Naturally of a devotional temperament and brought up in the lowest of evangelical beliefs, gradually, as I grew older, I sought for a more perfect expression of my nature, first in the Episcopal Church of England, in which I was confirmed, till at last, attracted by the ritual and authority of the Roman Catholic Church, I finally landed myself in that Community. A wave of scepticism, however, after a few years, passed over my mind, partly owing to the reading of such books as *Essays and Reviews*, and partly owing to the disappointment I felt when I found that the Roman Catholic Church, although

it gave commands, gave but little in explanation of its doctrines to its more humble followers.

My mother and I sent in our applications for membership in the Theosophical Society, proposed by Mrs. Brewerton and, I think, seconded by Madame de Steiger. In due time we received our diplomas, signed with the name of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, and we became members of a Society which, however few its members might then have been in 1881, and however little we recognised it, was destined to grow into a world-wide Movement, planned by the Great Ones of the race to spread divine knowledge among the children of men and to prepare for the coming of the World-Teacher. Little did I foresee what the Society would mean to me in after years, but even at that time it brought into my life a something that had not been there before. There was a strange, mysterious influence about the meetings which took place at that time in the rooms belonging to the National Society of Spiritualists, and I feel sure that influence was due to the foreshadowing of the future, and that a ray from the spiritual life of the Masters descended upon us at those early meetings of the Theosophical Society.

We used to file in and take our places round the long table, the door was shut, and we were tyled almost in the manner of a Masonic Temple. We all stood up, and the passwords of the Society were given in a low voice from one to the other with due order and solemnity. Coming into the Society at that time was very different to what it became afterwards ; it was then a Secret Society, and there was none of the propaganda of later years.

We felt that we were coming into touch with an unknown and mysterious power, and yet this power was a great reality. I have attended many hundreds of Theosophical meetings since then ; some that have thrilled me through and through as I experienced the divine life poured through the messengers of the Great Ones, and yet in spite of our absence of knowledge, those early gatherings stand out in my memory as priceless, for they brought me into touch for the first time with the principles of occult development, and gave the explanations of the spiritualistic phenomena in which I had spent so many years of investigation with so little result. A vista of infinite unfoldment

opened out before me as the possibility to be realised by the Divine in man.

What did we study? There were no books, but we often received letters from Mr. Sinnett, who told us about Madame Blavatsky; there were also articles in *The Theosophist*, but the only books so far published were *Isis Unveiled*, and *The Occult World*. *Isis Unveiled* needed a key, but *The Occult World* I read again and again. Those who come into the Theosophical Society at the present day have an enormous amount of literature before them, and their only problem is what to read. It seems almost unthinkable that at that time there was no *Esoteric Buddhism*, nothing of that great mass of teaching on occult physics and philosophy which has since been given to the world, through the writings of Mrs. Besant and Mr. C. W. Leabeater. The literature of Theosophy was almost a blank, and for that very reason probably we studied all the more eagerly the little information we could get. I have among my papers a copy of some early notes that were sent us, entitled *Notes from the Book of Kiu Ti*, a most metaphysical and philosophical discourse, strikingly different from the explanatory teaching of a later date.

Now and then in some of the papers there would occur the names of the Masters. We had no difficulty with the pronunciation of the name of the Master K. H., but it struck me, even at the time, that it could not be correct to pronounce the name of the other Master as if it were a woman's name, with the accent on the second syllable. It made no difference, however, in our reverence, and we carefully studied under the leadership of Dr. Wyld, who was the President when I first entered the Society. Serious, earnest men and women, we met regularly, Dr. Wyld, C. C. Massey, H. J. Hood, Miss E. Kislingbury, Mrs. Brewerton, Madame de Steiger and others, all hoping to obtain some glimpses of occult knowledge, some insight into the great planes of Nature and the forces as yet hidden from our view. This went on for some time ; the yearly change of President gave us C. C. Massey and Dr. Anna Kingsford, and at last, in the spring of 1883, there was a great change. I do not exactly remember the month in which Mr. Sinnett arrived in London, but I know that he was there in April when Mr. G. B. Finch was made President.

The coming of Mr. Sinnett gave new life to the meetings, and I should like here to record what all those present at that time have often expressed to me, their appreciation of the kindness of both Mr. and Mrs. Sinnett. They opened their house to members of the Branch, and we used to gather once a week for pleasant social afternoon tea and then an address. Personally I can never forget the kindness shown to me by Mr. and Mrs. Sinnett, and the hours that I spent at their house, listening to his exposition of occult knowledge, have been among the pleasantest in my life. True and dear friends, I renewed in my companionship with them ties of affection set up in former lives. One has passed into the higher life, but I know that she is still my friend ; to the other I tender loving gratitude for the help given in those early years of Theosophical life.[1]

When Mr. Sinnett first came over, he told us that he was about to publish a book (*Esoteric Buddhism*) embodying the teachings he had received from the Great Masters through Madame Blavatsky. He told us of the Letters,

[1] When Miss Arundale wrote these words Mr. Sinnett was still living.

and we were privileged to see some of them, and we could notice for ourselves the great difference in the handwriting of the Master K.H. and that of the Master M. Week by week we studied the papers that he so generously lent for the purpose, and a short time afterwards the book, *Esoteric Buddhism*, was published, and we may say that it took the theological and scientific world by storm. The effect of *Esoteric Buddhism* and the later Theosophical teachings on the theological and literary press can hardly be realised at the present day. Karma and Reincarnation, unknown terms almost before, were often spoken about in sermons and discourses by many leaders in the Church. The newspapers were full of allusions critical or condemnatory of the new ideas, but these ideas had come to stay, and the seed thus sown has borne ample fruit.

There was one other incident that gave me very great satisfaction ; one of those events, the memory of which dwells with one throughout the changing scenes of life, and permanently affects both feeling and thought. It was a personal and private matter, and yet I think I am fully justified in making it public now, although at the time I

rather shrank from speaking of it. It shows, however, how the Great Masters take notice and are aware of what may seem trivial matters in the Society, and that They deign to observe, even in the beginning, the humblest of Their followers. I had written to Madame Blavatsky on some quite unimportant topic, connected with *The Theosophist*, and had quite forgotten the letter. One day, a short time after Mr. Sinnett's arrival in London, he gave me this letter, on which had been written a few words of instruction to H.P.B. in the handwriting of the Master K.H. The words were: "A good, *earnest* Theosophist, a mystic whose co-operation ought to be secured thro' you." [1] This was my first personal touch with the Great Teacher, and I have carefully kept that letter, and I sometimes look back to it as the earnest of that communion with the Master to which, some day, I hope to attain.

When Mr. Sinnett came over to London, Dr. Anna Kingsford was President of the London Branch, and she was most certainly a learned and capable President and a fascinating and cultured lady in every way. She had a very

[1] See Appendix A.

strong bias towards the Egyptian Mysteries, and at the same time a decided Christian tendency of a mystic character. She wanted to explain everything through Egyptian philosophy and symbolism, and unfortunately brought this line of study solely into the deliberations of the London Branch, and was very decided as to the relative importance of the Christo-Egyptian as compared with the Indian teachings. This did not altogether suit the members, who for the most part desired, above all things, to learn more about the Indian occult knowledge. We had a firm belief in the Masters of Wisdom, and some of us had taken the vow of the heart to try and follow Their teachings, and to strive for the unfoldment of the inner powers that should lead us to a more perfect communion with Them.

This division among the members almost led to a split in the London Lodge, as it was then called, when the matter was brought to a harmonious issue by Colonel Olcott who, in April, 1884, accompanied by Mr. Mohini M. Chatterji, came to London from Paris where they had been staying with H. P. B. on the arrival of the party from India.

Colonel Olcott and Mr. Mohini Chatterji were certainly a most remarkable contrast. The one with his portly figure, long white beard and generally benevolent air, drew attention as he passed by a certain massiveness and importance which marked his bearing. The other was slighter in build, his black hair worn long, under a small Indian cap, his brown complexion and dark eyes showing him to be a denizen of a far distant land. These were two of the party that came over to London in 1884, and for a short but brilliant period the star of the Theosophical Society shone clear and bright, even on the frivolous and fashionable world of London.

The Colonel proposed to settle the disagreements by giving Dr. Anna Kingsford and those who followed her a charter for a separate Lodge. This she agreed to, and the meeting for the election of the officers of the London Lodge was arranged, and Mr. G. B. Finch was chosen as President. It was at this meeting that I first beheld that strange and wonderful personality which was called H. P. B. The business of the meeting was quietly proceeding, if I mistake not it was in a long room at Queen Anne's Mansions, where the Theosophical

meetings were then being held, when I saw Mohini Chatterji suddenly step down from his seat on the platform and go towards the door, where on one of the benches was seated a bulky figure of a woman dressed in a long, loose, black robe. To our surprise, I might almost say to our consternation, for with one or two exceptions no one there present knew anything of Indian customs, nor of the reverence shown in saluting a Guru, Mohini Chatterji prostrated himself on the ground before her, and Mr. Sinnett, pronouncing the magic words "Madame Blavatsky," went to receive her and lead her to the platform.[1]

What went on at the meeting after that I do not in the slightest degree remember; that

[1] The following is an account of the same incident by C. W. Leadbeater in *How Theosophy Came to Me*:

She sat listening to the wrangling on the platform for a few minutes, and then began to exhibit distinct signs of impatience. As there seemed to be no improvement in sight, she then jumped up from her seat, shouted in a tone of military command the one word "Mohini!" and then walked straight out of the door into the passage. The stately and dignified Mohini came rushing down that long room at his highest speed, and as soon as he reached the passage threw himself incontinently flat on his face on the floor at the feet of the lady in black. Many people arose in confusion, not knowing what was happening; but a moment later Mr. Sinnett himself also came running to the door, went out and exchanged a few words, and then, re-entering the room, he stood up on the end of our bench and spoke in a ringing voice the fateful words: "Let me introduce to the London Lodge as a whole—Madame Blavatsky!"

strange personality filled my mind with its image, and my memory can find naught else. In after days when I grew to know her better, I have found in H. P. B. much that I did not then recognise, but never have I found her power so great, so compelling, as in that first moment of contact with that strange and marvellous being, the writer of *The Secret Doctrine*, the messenger from the Masters, whose loyal and devoted servant she ever was. Long years have elapsed since then ; I have seen H. P. B. in storm and calm ; I have judged and misjudged her ; but I feel sure that at that first meeting my intuition was clear ; I recognised the messenger of the Great Ones and answered to the call of the past.[1]

Naturally H. P. B. became the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Sinnett, and we were privileged to share a little in hospitality, and Colonel Olcott and Mohini Chatterji came to our house, 77 Elgin Crescent ; and I remember the satisfaction the dear old Colonel expressed in noting that the house bore the double mystic number. Glad indeed were we to have such guests, and the first time

[1] The true reason for the powerful effect just then of H. P. B.'s personality on Miss Arundale was that the Mahachohan was occupying the body. See Appendix B.

that they came to lunch, the child in the house (G. S. Arundale) came down to dessert, as is the pleasant custom in many English homes ; but the coming was not so pleasant for the little six-year-old boy, for when he first saw Mohini Chatterji, terror showed itself in a wave of scarlet, ominous of trouble. A kindly smile, however, and the assurance that there was no cause for fear, made all right, and the dark-skinned Indian and the " colourless " child soon became fast friends.

Many amusing incidents took place when our Indian brother visited fashionable families, unused as he was to European conventionalities and modes of behaviour at dinner ; but he used carefully to watch what people did and try to do likewise, and I know that all were astonished at the perfect and blameless manner in which he comported himself in the midst of so much that must have been, to say the least, strange to him ; it is doubtful whether an Englishman, who is so much the slave of habit, could have adapted himself as easily to similar unusual conditions. I well remember the incident related by Colonel Olcott in his *Diary Leaves*, of how Mohini was under the impression that a lady of the æsthetic

reform movement, whom he had to take in to dinner, was a harmless lunatic, her costume being somewhat uncommon, and he was almost afraid to speak to her for fear of giving cause for excitement.

Towards the end of May, 1884, H. P. B. and our guests returned to Paris, where they remained for a few weeks. By this time I had seen a great deal of H. P. B., for besides the great kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Sinnett, who held open house for all Theosophists to have the privilege of seeing the great pioneer of the Movement, we had also the satisfaction of having her many times in our own house. I gradually began to realise what afterwards became a certainty, when she had lived for some time with us, that the H. P. B. body might sometimes be the habitation, for a time, of different entities. It was quite impossible to conceive that the gentle, and I might almost say childlike entity, could be the same as the strong and angry Russian, who used language not altogether parliamentary. There was also another phase, or rather aspect, of this mysterious personality. It happened many times in the course of my connection with her that I

became aware of an unusual power proceeding from her, an awe-inspiring influence, a penetration that made one feel that the blue-grey eyes could pierce through the veil of flesh and read one's very soul. I was at that time but a novice in the Theosophical life, ignorant of much that has later been taught me, and often I could only gaze and wonder.

On the return of H. P. B. to London she came to our house. I will try to give what I remember of that interesting experience.

CHAPTER III

H. P. B. AT OUR HOUSE

IN looking back through such a long vista of years, memory often fails as to the when of the occurrence of certain incidents. The incidents themselves are clear and distinct, but the period during which H.P.B. was our guest is so crowded with events and experiences of a startling character, that it is difficult for me to adjust the occurrences, as they stand out in my memory, in due order and sequence. There are events which may have occurred in the early time of her stay in London, and again they may have occurred on her return from Paris to our house at 77 Elgin Crescent. I do not think this uncertainty will matter, for it is the facts and incidents connected with H.P.B.'s visit that are of interest and not so much the exact week of their occurrence.

There are two points of interest that took place, however, during the first period of her stay that show how the Great Masters have been ever guiding, directing and encouraging those who draw near to Them in loyal confidence. A few members of the London Lodge had felt that there was not, among the general members, that full and unbounded trust in the Masters and in Their teachings, which should mark the attitude of those who desired instruction from the Greater Ones of the race. We desired therefore to form an Inner Group, craving recognition from the Masters, pledging ourselves to obedience in all matters connected with spiritual progress, and praying for teaching so long as we remained faithful members of the group. We were bold in those days, and we asked the Masters to show Their approval by Their signatures to a paper which we wrote embodying our desire. I have this paper before me as I write, and I see that many who wrote their names on that bit of paper have passed on to another condition of consciousness. Some have had their opportunity and apparently have failed to persevere, but to the five or six remaining of that little "Inner Group" I am sure the

Masters' words as then written will still be a source of joy and blessing. The words which appeared on the paper were found on it at our next meeting, and are as follows, in the well-known handwriting of Master K. H. :

> Approved. The covenant is mutual. It will hold good so long as the actions of the undersigned are accordant with the pledges implied in " the fundamental principles of the group," and by them accepted.

This was signed by the Master K. H., and the word " Approved " and His signature was written by Master M. Truly and faithfully has the Masters' promise been carried out. It was but a small group in 1884, but it was a foreshadowing of the world-wide company known as the E.S., or the Master's School.[1]

One other incident belonged to the same period. I desired above all things that my adopted son, George Arundale, then a child of six years old, should be a servant of the Masters and dedicated him to Their Service. I gave H. P. B. a photograph of the boy and asked that the photograph might be taken to Adyar. Many years after, Colonel

[1] See Appendix C.

Olcott gave me back the photo. It was old and faded, but on the back was written in the Master's handwriting, "Accepted". Truly my adopted son has been "accepted," he has passed into the band of "Brothers," and is working out Their Will in service.

While H. P. B. was in Paris I sometimes had letters from her. She had a very amusing way of asking for something to be done. "My dear friend," she would say, "you alone can save the situation"; at first I used to wonder and used to read the letter very carefully to see what the particular trouble might be, and generally I found it at the end: "I can get no paper, of the kind I require, in Paris; please go to Oxford Street, and send me over a ream."

H. P. B. returned to London in June, and from the time of her taking up her abode with us at No. 77 Elgin Crescent, Notting Hill, became famous in the early annals of London Theosophy.

Mohini M. Chatterji accompanied Madame Blavatsky, and Colonel Olcott was with us from time to time as his tours allowed. There was also a very important member of the Indian

contingent, namely Babula, H. P. B.'s servant ; in his picturesque turban and white dress, he created quite a little sensation in the Crescent ; and on the afternoons when tea was served and H. P. B.'s Russian samovar glistened and shone on the table, and Babula bore cups of tea and sweet cakes to the visitors, we were certainly a unique house in suburban London. The house was always full of visitors, and as H. P. B. often liked to invite friends to stay, I never knew whether I should have one person or twenty to lunch or dinner as the case might be. The house was not large, but there were two good rooms with folding doors between, and it was a sight to see H. P. B. seated in a big armchair surrounded by learned as well as fashionable people. A brilliant conversationalist, she kept young and old entranced, and at the same time her graceful fingers were constantly diving into the Nubian basket of tobacco that was ever by her side, and twisting the little cigarettes that she was constantly smoking. That was her social aspect. A very good description of these daily gatherings is given by Mrs. Campbell Praed in her book *Affinities*. Then very often Mohini Chatterji would answer questions on Indian

Philosophy. I have rarely met with anyone who could give such clear and forcible explanations clothed in such beautiful language. His lectures were much sought after, and we rarely closed our doors till one or two o'clock in the morning.

During this time the little George Arundale was sent to a day school quite near, but he was not entirely out of it all, and I remember one afternoon a party was made up to go to the Zoological Gardens ; I do not know why that especial place was chosen, but at any rate we all went there in carriages and the child with us. Then a bath-chair was procured for H. P. B. and we proceeded to visit the animals. There were no occult phenomena on that visit, but there was the manifestation of a trait that showed forth the kindly nature of H. P. B. The child was running about as children will, and running near H. P. B.'s chair suddenly missed his footing and fell to the ground. H. P. B., in spite of the fact that she moved with difficulty, almost sprang out of the chair, throwing her umbrella on one side, and tried to help the child up. It was but a little thing, it is true, but it showed the same kindly disregard

of self that was shown when she went steerage in order to provide for the passage of a poor mother and her children to New York.

I am sometimes asked if we ever had phenomena in the house when H. P. B. was there. Phenomena of one kind or another were so constant that if anything unusual occurred we were apt to seek an occult cause before an ordinary one. It would not have been a healthy atmosphere to continue, but it was the first stage in Theosophical teaching, and necessary to draw the attention of people to forces and powers in nature of which they were completely ignorant. I have been present many times when curious little "three-cornered notes" came fluttering down, apparently from the ceiling, dealing with matters which we might be at the moment discussing. I remember one such small missive coming during a visit to Cambridge. We, H. P. B., Mohini and myself, were in a small lodging somewhere near the Union Society, and we were at tea, discussing something about the work there, when the tiny letter fell. We opened it and found some useful advice about the people we were going to see.

A curious happening which has never been effaced from my memory took place in the early part of H. P. B.'s stay with us. Many people at that time wished to get into communication with the Masters through H. P. B., and would sometimes bring letters asking that they should be forwarded to the Masters. H. P. B. always said: "It is not for me to forward the letters; the Masters will take them if They wish," and the letters were put into a certain drawer in her room. Sometimes the writers received a message through H. P. B., very often they did not; but the drawer was kept open. One day Mr. Sinnett had something he wished to ask of Master K. H., and that letter also was placed in the drawer. More than a week passed and there was no answer, and I was grieved, for we all desired that the questions should be answered. Day after day I looked into the drawer, but the letter was still there. One morning at about 7.30 I went in to H. P. B. (I always went to her room the first thing); I found her at her table, writing as usual, and I said to her: "How much I wish that letter could be taken." She looked very straight at me and said: "Bring me the letter," in rather a severe tone. I gave

the letter into her hand. There was a candle on the table and: "Light the candle," she said; then giving me the letter she said: "Burn the letter." I felt rather sorry to burn Mr. Sinnett's letter but, of course, did as she said; "Now go to your room and meditate." I went up to my room, which I had only left a short time before. My room was at the top of the house, in what we call an attic, for all the lower rooms were being used by our visitors, and I and the little boy slept upstairs. I went to the window, which looked on to a beautiful garden with lovely trees. Before the window there was a box, covered with a pink cloth, and I stood there for a minute or two wondering what H. P. B. meant, what I was to meditate on, and whether I had committed a fault in being impatient about Mr. Sinnett's letter.

In a few minutes I cast my eyes down on the pink cloth, and in the middle of the cloth there was a letter which either I had not noticed before or which had not been there. I took up the envelope and looked at it, and found there was no address on it; it was quite blank, but it contained a thickness of paper and I concluded it was a letter. I held it in my hand and

looked at it once or twice, and still finding the envelope without name or address, I felt sure it must be something occult and wondered for whom it could be. At length I decided to take the letter to H.P.B., and looking at it once again saw, in the clear writing of the Master K. H., Mr. Sinnett's name. That the name had not been on it at the beginning I am sure, nor during the many times when I looked at it most carefully. The letter was an answer to the one I had burnt, and it gave me much joy to be the recipient in the curious way in which it was sent.

There were several instances of the same kind. Once, when the letter I wanted answered was very private to myself, instead of putting it in the usual drawer I carried it in my pocket unknown to H.P.B. or to anyone else. But one night when I was sitting with her just before going up to my room, she handed me a letter in the well-known handwriting. I have that letter now, of course, and shall ever feel that the kindly answer from so great a Being was one of the causes that determined my after life's work.[1]

It was a time of continual excitement ; many people of note came to see H.P.B. Among

[1] See Appendix D.

them I remember well Mr. Frederick W. H. Myers of Psychic Research fame. H.P.B. happened to be alone that afternoon, and she and her visitor began talking about the phenomena in which Mr. Myers was so interested. "I wish you would show me a proof of your occult power," said he, "will you not do something that will prove that there are these occult forces of which you speak?" "What would be the good?" said Madame Blavatsky. "Even if you saw and heard, you would not be convinced." "Try me," he said. She looked at him for a moment or so in that strange, penetrating manner she had, and turning to me said: "Bring me a finger-bowl and some water in it." They were sitting in the full light of a summer's afternoon; she was to the right of Mr. Myers who was seated in a small chair about three feet away. I brought the glass bowl of water and she told me to place it on a stool just in front of Mr. Myers and a fairly long distance from her, which I did. We sat for a few moments in quiet expectation, and then from the glass there seemed to come four or five notes, such as we have called the "astral bells". It was evident that Mr. Myers was

astonished ; he looked at H.P.B. and her folded hands in her lap, and then again at the glass bowl ; there was no visible connection between the two. Again the notes of the astral bell sounded, clear and silvery, and no movement on the part of Madame Blavatsky. He turned to me, and one could see that he was quite confused as to how the sounds could have been produced. H.P.B. smiled, and said : " Nothing very wonderful, only a little knowledge of how to direct some of the forces of nature." As Mr. Myers left he turned to me and said : " Miss Arundale, I shall *never* doubt again." But alas for the fickle, doubting mind ; before a fortnight had passed he wrote to say he was not convinced, and that the sounds might have been produced in this way or that. H.P.B. was not one whit disturbed, in fact she said : " I knew it, but I thought I would give him what he asked for." This incident goes to show that conviction is rarely gained through phenomena ; they arouse the attention, and if the mind is receptive and willing to investigate and not declare that that which is not understood cannot be, then there is a possibility that new facts and laws may be discovered.

This was not the only time that I heard the astral bells. Once when Madame de Novikoff was spending the evening at our house, she had been playing on the piano ; and as she got up from the piano and came to say good-bye, the last few notes that she had played came floating sweetly through the room, and again, as she passed through the hall to the door, the same notes echoed with our farewells.

H. P. B., however, sometimes gave rather hard lessons to those who desired to be Chelas in the great occult school, and I remember how troubled I was once when we were out visiting at an afternoon reception. I had closed my eyes for a moment or two for I was tired, both with excitement and work, when I suddenly heard her call me by name and say : " What sort of a Chela are you if you cannot keep awake ? " I can only say that my desire for sleep was, for the time being, completely overcome. Mohini Chatterji also came in for a similar rebuff. She had told him to write a letter to someone, and when he brought it for her to see, there was something about it that she did not approve and he was told to write it again. This he did, but apparently with as little good

result as the first time ; and some very strong language was used, and he had to write it out a third time. If we had been alone there would have been no sting, but then the training to overcome pride would not have been given.

As I look back at those two or three months spent in her wonderful presence, I find that much that I did not understand then, now takes on a new light, and that things which I thought at the time unkind and unnecessary were not casual acts without an aim, but a definitely planned endeavour to strengthen and help those who to a certain extent were her pupils. In the next pages of my reminiscences I hope to be able to give one or two other incidents during her stay at our house, for all that can be recalled of her great personality is of interest to the members of the Society she founded.

CHAPTER IV

H. P. B. IN GERMANY

I REPRODUCE a letter which was sent to the child George Arundale by H. P. B. It shows the kindly feelings that made her think of her host's little boy even when she was away. Its quaint phraseology is an example of many letters she used to write, and the last few words are an almost occult foreshadowing of the time when the boy did know and did indeed become a Chela.

It is difficult for me to write about that all too short time when H. P. B. was with us. I kept no diary, and my mind is so crowded with scenes and images in which *she* was the central figure that it is difficult to decipher them so as to be clear and interesting to others. I see her of an early morning in her room writing at her table, the floor strewn with burnt matches which were my despair, careful housekeeper as I was, for coverlets, tablecovers, and carpets might well

To Georges Chela Esq.

Happy New Year to the most Honorable Georgy Esq. a load of sweets is forthcoming from Russia, a cold & pious country where the undersigned is supposed to have evoluted from. When it arrives — you shall have it & when you understand what your loving old friend means — you shall indeed be a chela

yours respectfully

H P Blavatsky.

get burned, and even the house itself might have received considerable damage, for H. P. B. was accustomed to throw her lighted match away without any consideration as to where it might fall. I have also lively remembrances of some of the difficult times involved by H. P. B.'s absolute disregard of all conventionality. People would come long distances to see her, and it was generally understood that visitors might come between four and six in the afternoon. Sometimes, however, for no reason that we could see, she would decline to come from her room. I remember well one afternoon there was quite a distinguished set waiting to meet her, and when I went up to inform her that visitors had come to see her, I found her in a state of undress incompatible with a visit to the drawing-room. When I told her who was there, a little strong language was used and she said that Mr. and Mrs. X. might come up. I gently remonstrated that neither her room nor her person was quite in a suitable condition for visitors ; she told me I might go somewhere, but if she came down she should come down as she was, and if she saw anyone she would see them as she was, and that I was to send her food as

soon as possible for she was hungry. The visitors had to leave and I made what excuses I could.

The most pleasant time I had was always in the early morning ; she always seemed more get-at-able then, her mouth settled in pleasant curves, her eyes kind and brilliant, and she always seemed to understand and sympathise not only with what one said but also with what one did not say. I never felt afraid of H. P. B. in spite of the very strong language she sometimes used. One always somehow felt it was *surface* strong language. I had free entry into her room at all times, and I can truly say that, from the first time she came to our house to the time when I saw her about three weeks before her death, she never received me otherwise than as a trusted friend. We differed ; I misunderstood her ways ; but I remember on that last occasion a mutual friend made some objections to what I had said, and H. P. B. with a twinkle in her eye said : " Miss Arundale and I understand each other, and there is nothing more to be said."

During the time that H. P. B. was with us, an American lady, Mrs. L. C. Holloway, came

to see her, and H. P. B. found that Mrs. Holloway had certain psychic qualities which would enable her to be used for the Master's work ; and although those very psychic qualities brought the danger of mistake, H. P. B. determined to try her. Mohini Chatterji and Mrs. Holloway were told to look back into the far past and sketch out the history of the long distant ages. They did so, and in the little upper room at Elgin Crescent the two new friends, new in the present life, although old friends in the past, gave day after day to the writing of *Man : Fragments of Forgotten History.*[1] I was constantly with them, and found the delving into the shadows most fascinating. There may be, I know there are, some mistakes in the book ; it was written before *The Secret Doctrine*, before the later knowledge so clearly given in *Man : Whence, How and Whither.* But the Teachers helped, and manuscript pages were placed before Them, and They made some corrections from time to time.

One incident I remember : Mrs. Holloway and Mohini had been striving for some

[1] *Man : Fragments of Forgotten History*, by Two Chelas in the Theosophical Society, London, 1885.

time to get a certain page of manuscript right, as they saw the facts, but they could not satisfy themselves. They were sitting at a square table, one at each side, and I was sitting at the third side, when at last Mrs. Holloway said : " I cannot see it," and pushed the papers away from her. The table was covered with sheets of foolscap on which they had been writing, and at last she or Mohini, which I do not remember, took up the page again, and on the margin was written in the clear handwriting of the Master in blue pencil the one word "Try". The prefaces by the Eastern and Western Chelas show the poetic psychism of both, and how they suddenly recognised each other as friends in a distant past. It would seem as if this writing was the only cause of their being brought together, for in a short time after the book was finished, psychic misunderstandings arose and Mrs. Holloway returned to America. I liked her very much and I saw her once astrally at night, but I have neither seen nor heard of her since.

In the summer of 1884 we received an invitation from a kind friend at Elberfeld, Herr Gustav Gebhard, to come and spend a few weeks

at his home. Not only did he invite Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Mohini, but he invited a large party to accompany them —my mother, myself and my little George, Bertram Keightley, and some others whose names I have forgotten—and many joined the party later. No words can express the kindness of our host, he franked the whole party, and at some of the principal stations on the road we were served with baskets of fruit and dainty sandwiches and lemonade. We were a merry party, H. P. B. in her wittiest and most genial mood, and the large saloon carriage echoed with pleasant laughter and bright speech. That time at Elberfeld was a bright page to look back on, although it ended in the abrupt return of H. P. B. to India on account of the missionary and Coulomb attack.

During our stay at Elberfeld was the letter received which was sent to me as Treasurer of the London Lodge ; I do not think the details of its appearance have been given. The drawing-room at Elberfeld was a large, high room with very high doors. We used to sit in this room before going down to dinner, which was on a lower floor. It often happened

that H. P. B. did not go down and something was served to her upstairs. On the evening I am speaking of, she decided to remain upstairs and settled her bulky figure comfortably in a large armchair while all the rest of us went down, her host asking her what she would like sent up. After dinner the party returned to the drawing-room and found H. P. B. quietly ensconced in her chair, as if she had never left it. A party gathered round her as usual and talk was being carried on, when somebody said: "What is that white thing on the top of the portal of the door?" A high chair was brought, and the "white thing" proved to be an envelope addressed to me as Treasurer of the London Lodge. I fully realised that there seemed to be no special reason why the missive should have been given in that peculiar manner. It may have been intended to show that H. P. B. had no connection with it, for it would have been almost impossible for H. P. B. to have mounted on a chair and placed a letter at that height. I have my own theories about many of these curious happenings; we have been often told that the Masters Themselves did not always concern Themselves with the way in which Their

messages were delivered, for this was the concern of the Chela who was the agent for their transmission, and it may well have been that an Indian Chela might choose this way as being dramatic. It *was* dramatic, and people waited till I had assured myself that, although addressed to me, it was also a general communication, and I read it aloud :

TO F. A.

The day of the separation is close at hand, and I would say to you a few words. You are an officer of the L. L. and as such you have a special duty and opportunity.

It is not enough that you should set the example of a pure and virtuous life and a tolerant spirit : this is but negative goodness—and for Chelaship will never do. You should, as a simple member, much more as an officer, learn that you may teach, acquire spiritual knowledge and strength that the weak may lean upon you, and the sorrowing victims of ignorance learn from you the cause and remedy of their pain. If you choose you may make your home one of the most important centres of spiritualising influence in all the world. The " power " is now concentrated there, and will remain—if you do not weaken or repulse it—remain to your blessing and advantage. You will do good by encouraging the visits of your fellow-members and of enquirers and by holding meetings of the more congenial for study and instruction. You should induce others in other quarters to do likewise. You should constantly advise with your associates in the Council how to make the general meetings of the Lodge interesting. New members should be taken in hand from the

first by the older ones especially selected and assigned to the duty in each case, and instructed thoroughly in what you have already learnt, so that they may be capable of participating intelligently in the proceedings of regular meetings. There is a strong disposition to slur over the ceremony of initiation in such a way as to make no serious impression upon the candidate. The method of the Parent Society may be unsuited to English prejudices, yet to fall into the opposite extreme of undignified haste is very much worse. Your ways of initiation are a standing insult to every regular Chela, and have provoked the displeasure of their Masters. It is a sacred thing with us : why should it be otherwise with you ? If every fellow took for his motto the wise words of a young boy, but one who is a fervent Theosophist, and repeated with Bertram Keightley : " I am a Theosophist before I am an Englishman," no foe could ever upset your Society. However, candidates should be taught, and old members always recollect, that this is a serious affair the Society is engaged in, and that they should begin the work as seriously by making their own lives Theosophical. The " Journal " is well begun, and should be continued. It should be the natural complement to that of the S.P.R., which is a bag of nuts uncracked.

Your Branch should keep in correspondence with all the others in Europe : the Germania can help you—the others need your help. This is a movement for all Europe—not for London only, remember. The American members are under great disadvantages, and have had until now, since the Founders left, no competent leaders : your Branch can, and should, help them, for they are your neighbours, and the Head Quarters have already too much to do in other quarters. A Chela will be detailed to answer general questions if the Branch deserves assistance. But remember : we are not public scribes or clerks, with time to be continually writing notes and answers to individual

correspondents about every trifling personal matter that they should answer for themselves. Nor shall we permit those private notes to be forwarded as freely as hitherto. Time enough to *discuss* the terms of Chelaship when the aspirant has digested what has already been given out, and mastered his most palpable vices and weaknesses. This you may show or say to all. The present is for the Branch addressed to you as its officer.

You have accepted an important service—the financial agency—and done wisely. Such aid was very needed. If the members in Europe wish well to the Mother Society, they should help to circulate its publications, and to have them translated into other languages, when worthy of it. Intentions—you may tell your Fellow-Members—and kind words count for little with us. Deeds are what we want and demand. L.C.H.[1] has done—poor child—more in that direction during two months than the best of your members in these five years.

The members of the London Lodge have such an opportunity as seldom comes to men. A movement calculated to benefit an English-speaking world is in their custody. If they do their whole duty, the progress of materialism, the increase of dangerous self-indulgence, and the tendency toward spiritual suicide, can be checked. The theory of vicarious atonement has brought about its inevitable re-action : only the knowledge of Karma can offset it. The pendulum has swung from the extreme of blind faith towards the extreme of materialistic skepticism, and nothing can stop it save Theosophy. Is not this a thing worth working for, to save those nations from the doom their ignorance is preparing for them ?

Think you the truth has been shown to you for your sole advantage ? That we have broken the silence

[1] Mrs. Laura C. Holloway.

of centuries for the profit of a handful of dreamers only ? The converging lines of your Karma have drawn each and all of you into this Society as to a common focus, that you may each help to work out the results of your interrupted beginnings in the last birth. None of you can be so blind as to suppose that this is your first dealing with Theosophy ? You surely must realise that this would be the same as to say that effects came without causes. Know then that it depends now upon each of you whether you shall henceforth struggle alone after spiritual wisdom through this and the next incarnate life, or in the company of your present associates, and greatly helped by the mutual sympathy and aspiration. Blessings to all—deserving them.

K. H.

We did not pass entirely scathless from H. P. B.'s ire while at Elberfeld. Anything that in any way seemed to reflect on the dignity or power of the Masters was to her like a red rag to a bull. Mr. Mohini in the course of some remarks had stated that he considered it quite possible that the "Brothers of the Shadow" might sometimes imitate the writing of a Master. This for some reason incensed Madame Blavatsky, and we saw that something was amiss. That afternoon we took a drive in the country ; there were two carriages for us, and H. P. B. came. We were a quiet party, quite feeling we were under the ban of her displeasure. At last we came to a small wood, and she stopped the carriages

and got down, bidding us follow. She took us to a small, open space and began some of her strongest language to Mohini, also including us, saying we were none of us fit to be in the Society and that we never could expect to be pupils of a Master. Her power, her command of the English language, her manifest sincerity, her devotion to the Masters, her indignation that anything should be said or done that could possibly lessen Their dignity, was so great that we could only feel guilty before her, and I can judge what others must have felt by my own feelings.

Only at one other time have I ever seen H. P. B. in such a state of anger, and that was after the famous Psychical Research Society's meeting at which Colonel Olcott gave some very foolish accounts of manifestations of the Masters. I remember well our journey home in the cab, the tense, stern quietude of H. P. B., holding herself in till she got into the house, and then the fury with which she lashed Colonel Olcott with her words, her reproaches for having brought the names of the Masters into ridicule. I remember the strong attitude of Colonel Olcott, patient, as he owned he had made a mistake, which indeed

he had; till at last, when she bade him go out of the Society, he drew himself up and said: "I do not care what you say; I am in the Society, and I shall remain and work for it till the Master turns me out." Her anger seemed then to evaporate, and she dismissed us all to bed, it being three o'clock in the night.

The time at Elberfeld soon passed; my mother and the little George and myself decided to go home, and H.P.B. and the others were to return to London later.

There were other phenomena during our stay in Elberfeld, but I have said so much on this subject which is really unimportant, that I feel inclined to drop all further mention of phenomena and return to a more interesting matter. It was at Elberfeld that the first news came to H.P.B. of the treachery of the Coulombs, aided and abetted by the Christian missionaries. Week after week, as she awaited news, she suffered through being so far away from the scene of attack. It was in vain that the Lodges unanimously expressed their confidence; her one great fear was that the dignity of the Masters might in any way be lowered. She was ready in a way to

throw herself and her honour before the public, provided that no breath of aspersion should be cast upon Their names. In September H.P.B. and Colonel Olcott returned to London, and for a short time we again had her with us. I do not remember that the movement seemed to suffer, although there were many who foretold the downfall of Theosophy. Distinguished Theosophists came forward about that time ; there were Mr. and Mrs. Cooper-Oakley and, last but not least, I remember Mr. Leadbeater as a visitor to our house. I remember him in his clerical dress and his general appearance of a distinguished English gentleman. He quickly passed all barriers ; the Master's call found a willing answer and it was evident from the very first that he " meant business," as he has often told us that we also must " mean business " if we would pass into the Master's service. His position as a priest of the English Church, the opinion of society, of his family—all were set at naught, and at the Master's bidding he joined H.P.B. and Theosophy at a time when many were turning their backs on both. I have in London many letters that he wrote to me from India in connection with London Lodge

business, and they all show the same deepest devotion to the Masters and Their work which has been evidenced in his life ever since.

Madame Blavatsky returned to India in October, but she did not remain there very long, as the following year she returned to Europe on account of ill-health. I did not see very much of her then, although I spent one week with her at Wurzburg. This brings to a conclusion my personal reminiscences of H.P.B. If the Editor of *The Theosophist* thinks that any further remembrances on my part might be of interest, I will endeavour to work up my memory ; but for the present I conclude with the words that I consider it a great, very great happiness to have been brought by my good Karma into such close relationship with the great Pioneer of our Theosophical Movement, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky.

LETTERS OF H. P. BLAVATSKY TO FRANCESCA ARUNDALE

I

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY OF THE T.S.A.S.,[1] BOMBAY

[? *Paris, June,* 1884.]

MY DEAREST MISS ARUNDALE,

Olcott writes to me to say that I had better go to Elberfeldt then to come to London. Now I know better for Master told me I *was needed* for more than one purpose in England. My aunt and sister leave in a few days and I have to leave Paris on the 27th—at the latest. Now I want to know, whether it is simply a flap-doodle of his—this advice or that he thinks, perhaps, that I will be in your way. Perhaps indeed, I will be a source of disturbance and

[1] Though written probably in 1884, H. P. B. uses some old note-paper with these letters which are for "Theosophical Society of the Arya Samaj".

botheration to you ? Do tell me frankly and candidly ; for in such case I will take a room somewhere with board and lodging. Do not keep on ceremonies, or make it a question of delicacy, if indeed I will be *de trop* in coming, as agreed, to you. I am very much perplexed and do not know what to do.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.[1]

II

9th Sept. [1884, Elberfeldt.]

MY DEAREST MISS ARUN.

It is very dull without all of you. The rooms look like a fashionable burying vault and I feel like an unfashionable corpse in it. My aunt travels the whole day long and I sit and see sights in my old armchair—some of them quite funny too. Have you seen Mme. de Morsier, and Mme. Adam ? Why was your programme —that of Solovioff—with regard to your visit to that lady—changed or if you like, altered ? I am very much afraid, dear child of the Gods, that you are at times very fickle and nervous.

[1] The signature has been cut out of the letter, presumably for some album.

You are easily demoralized now-a-days. You ought to become a little firmer, Sister Teresa, lest from a saint you should tumble down into a sinner.

Well my love, and kindest regards to your dear Mother. My love and blessing to Dharbagiri Nath [1] and do not forget,

Yours truly,

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

III

(The first part of this letter is missing. Evidently it refers to the Coulomb attack, and the date is probably between August and October, 1884.—C. J.)

with my permission. He has *deceived no one*, as far as I know, hitherto. He has only *witheld* the truth from those who would never understand it. But if he went on preaching *no Masters*, and the falseness of the "red and blue letters" giving them out for *spook*-letters (to save the Masters' names)—then he would be *deceiving most cruelly* theosophists, and I would stop the attempt, by unveiling the truth he and I were

[1] "Bawajee" who later turned against H. P. B.

ordered to keep silent upon. Now if these words are once more understood by you as implying that MASTERS *either* countenanced or *encouraged* deception then all I can say is you have not acquired yet the true perception of a theosophist—and I had hoped you had. There are things in the *Occult* circle which *no one outside of it* can rightly judge. That's all. You write as though I—one who is, perhaps, *the only one* to appreciate you at your *true value* (on the scales of MASTERS—which scales *cannot* err) —that I, doubt you, or blame you or what not. This is the saddest of all. Even Mohini is incapable of appreciating the cruel position I am in, the *inextricable* occult web, I am made helpless by—but whatever happens I will be true to my duty and MASTERS. If, instead of misunderstanding such, theosophists would join together and keep stubbornly *unaffected* by the attacks on false charges by this false *unreal* world then would Masters be nearer to them and *obviously* help them. But They can never meddle with the false.

Yours with love,

H. P. B.

IV

(In this letter of complaint against Colonel Olcott by H.P.B., we must not forget there is another side to the matter. That will appear in his letters to Miss Arundale. See Appendix E.—C. J.)

WURZBURG,

6 Ludwig Strasse,

Aug. 29, 1885.

MY DEAR MISS ARUNDALE,

This is a business letter and such as you know I hate writing. But "necessity has no law" as you know. I could have written it to Col. Olcott, but since he is started upon representing me as a *shell* with no more soul or spirit inside it, and as suffering at times from *mental aberrations* he would be quite capable of paying no attention to my just complaint. Otherwise, I might ask him, whether it enters into his schemes *of saving the Society* by sacrificing me to the Nether world, by means of regular starvation. Now you are one, whom I consider I may say, my best and truest friends. You and your dear mother have always been my staunchest defenders and therefore, to you, I

shall say all and take any advice you may choose to proffer.

When we went away, packed off at 24 hours' notice, after paying our passages, and arriving at Naples, where we landed with hardly any clothes (no warm ones at all events) no linen etc., and some 600 francs in our pockets (that's to say in *Bawajee's*, for in mine and Mary Flynn's there was primeval chaos with nothing in it) half of that money was immediately spent in securing lodgings, paying hotel bills, etc., etc. Well for the first month we lived upon £10 or 12 (250 or 300 francs), wiped our faces with towels made out of an old chemise of mine and I ate one meal a day—Bawajee and Mary Flynn going generally without—*he*, poor noble little fellow under the pretext of vegetarianism, she to keep him company. During the second month I received £25 from———(you will believe it, others WONT) and another £20 from some unknown friend, a theosophist who would not give his name sent from Paris. We bought a few towels and a friend lent us sheets, as up to that time we had slept on our plaids spread out. Then I received from Adyar—for May and June Rs. 400 or 800

francs—and we ceased starving. I could not remain in Italy. I needed comfortable rooms with stoves, and a little quiet and in Italy nothing of that could be found. I then selected a town in Germany, the quietest, and the cheapest and, as I was told that Kissingen Pandur waters were good for gout I decided to come here. But, had not poor devoted Bhawani Row sent Bawajee to help me the Rs. 500 you know about, we could not have moved and performed a journey, which, with sending on the luggage and forced stoppages on the way, for I feel too weak to go night and day in railway, this cost us more than 2,000 francs. We are now here, settled and well enough, in the way of comfort but in the sweet hope of remaining penniless in a very short time. Even the little money received by me for some Russian articles, not half that I reckoned upon is gone. It is nearly *five* months that we landed in Europe and since then we received only 400 rupees or 800 francs from Adyar. Were they even to send me regularly those wretched 400 francs a month it is next to impossible for me to live decently upon that money and Col. Olcott *ought to know it* if he

does not or wont. Sick, weak and crippled as I am, I had till now *no* means to take *even a servant.* I have to get up, and drag myself to the entrance door at every bell ringing, if Bawajee has to go out.

Such is the state of affairs and my position. But I would have never complained had not the Colonel in a most unaccountable way grudged me even that small help I received from devoted friends. Even those miserable 25 £—the crumbs collected for me by the devotion of a few poor Hindus, even to those crumbs he must need lay claim, assert his authority over them and instead of allowing Bhawani to send them on to us, he disposes of them, merely saying that he has provided otherwise for me !! What right in the world has *he*, to dispose thus of that money. When the Rs. 500 were first received, I said to Bawajee, " See if Colonel Olcott does not turn this sum into my monthly allowance." Bawajee thought the idea monstrous, yet it has turned as I thought.

Now I ask you to do me one favour. Write to him and if you like you may even send him on this letter. I *shall not* write to him any more. I am proud enough not to make a row for

money, or begin a polemic with him for the sake of a few pounds meant for me but which he confiscates for the Society. I have served the latter and given it my life's devotion my soul and blood as much and probably, if people always knew the truth—much more than he has. And if now the Society (meaning a few of its members) has not even the right to help me in my exile of sickness, without his meddling and dictating to it—then *I have done with him.* Unless you write to him the truth and say to him what I am now telling to you, he may never know it. But it *is* preposterous and well may Bawajee open his eyes in amazement, at *his* (the President's) doings.

Well, if it is so decreed that I should be left helpless in Col. Olcott's hands, then shall Bawajee and I, both starve for the greater glory *of Col. Olcott's* Society. You may tell him that owing to this last wise arrangement of his I am here, nearly penniless, with the £25 collected and sent to me lying in the bank in London, as an ornament, I suppose, and a sign of the Theos. Society's great wealth and prosperity in Europe.

My warmest love and regards to both dear Mrs. Arundale, yourself and my beloved boy Mohini. May every one of us feel as proud as he ought to be if he isn't, of the satisfaction he gives TO BOTH OUR MASTERS.

Yours for ever, here and elsewhere,

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

APPENDIX A[1]

77 ELGIN CRESCENT

NOTTING HILL

Sept. 8th [1882]

DEAR MADAM,

I hereby forward my subscription for *The Theosophist* for next year. I need hardly tell you how much I value your paper from which I am continually learning something.

As members (myself and mother) of the B. T. S.[2] I take this opportunity of saying that I trust the private religious opinions of individuals will not lead to a separation from the parent society, as I cannot conceive but that by so doing we should be taking a retrograde step away from any chance of obtaining further enlightenment.

[1] Letter 34 in *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, First Series.

[2] British Theosophical Society.

We have of course read Colonel Olcott's letter addressed to the members of the B.T.S. and agree with the views it expresses.

Please accept

dear Madam

our sincere good wishes for your success in your arduous labours.

Yours sincerely,

FRANCESCA ARUNDALE

A GOOD, *EARNEST* THEOSOPHIST, A MYSTIC WHOSE CO-OPERATION OUGHT TO BE SECURED THRO' YOU.

K. H.

APPENDIX B[1]

TO MOHINI *alone.*

Appearances go a long way with the "Pelings". One has to impress them externally before a regular, lasting, interior impression is made. Remember and try to understand why I expect you to do the following :

When Upasika arrives, you will meet and receive her as *though you were in India, and she your own mother.* You must not mind the crowd of Frenchmen and others. You have *to stun them* ; and if Colonel asks you why, you will answer him that it is the interior man, the *indweller* you salute, not H. P. B., for you were notified to that effect by us. And know for your own edification that One[2] far greater than myself has kindly consented to survey the whole situation under her guise, and then to

[1] Letter 62 in *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, Second Series. The letter was received in March, 1884, in Paris.

[2] The Maha Chohan.

visit, through the same channel, occasionally, Paris and other places where foreign members may reside. You will thus salute her on seeing and taking leave of her the whole time you are at Paris—regardless of comments and *her own surprise*. This is a test.

So far I am satisfied with your efforts. Persevere and teach. You may yet be the means of a great boon to your country. Do not lose heart like your weak-willed though stubborn companion.

K. H.

APPENDIX C[1]

IN view of the recent resignation of Mr. Massey and the reason for which it was given, namely, suspicion of the Mahatmas, and the inclination which has been shown by certain other members of the London Lodge to discredit the Eastern teaching and distrust its Teachers, we the undersigned members of the London Lodge, being convinced that no spiritual education is possible without absolute and sympathetic union between fellow students, desire to form an inner group.

Taking the word religion in its broadest sense and while leaving every member of the said group to follow his or her own theological system or creed—AS HERETOFORE DONE IN ALL THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETIES—we desire nevertheless to establish a bond of true brotherly union of such a nature as to realise those conditions, which we are convinced are

[1] Letter 5 in *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, First Series.

unattainable in the London Lodge as it is constituted.

For this Inner Group—the Adytum of the London Lodge—we humbly crave the uncharter-ed recognition of the Mahatmas, our Beloved Teachers : requesting them further to grant us special permission to form our own bye-laws and choose our own council ; and while remaining individually subject to the rules and bye-laws of the London Lodge, the group as such to be independent of the London Lodge in its special work.

The fundamental principle of the New Group to be implicit confidence in the Mahatmas and their teachings, and unswerving obedience to their wishes in all matters connected with spiritual progress.

N.B. Should however there be a sincere conviction on the part of any member that he, or she, cannot conscientiously render this unswerving obedience in all matters of spiritual progress, such member may with-draw from the inner circle, with the assurance and knowledge that the imputation

of dishonourable conduct will not be charged against him or her.

H. P. Blavatsky

—PROVIDED HE OR SHE DOES NOT MAKE ANY PART OF THE TEACHINGS PUBLIC BY WORD OR LETTER WITHOUT SPECIAL PERMISSION FROM THE UNDERSIGNED.—K. H.

Finally in submitting this prayer to our revered Masters we earnestly request them, if it meets with their approval, to confirm it with their signatures and to consent to continue their teachings as heretofore so long as there shall remain one faithful member in this group.

APPROVED. THE COVENANT IS MUTUAL. IT WILL HOLD GOOD SO LONG AS THE ACTIONS OF THE UNDERSIGNED ARE ACCORDANT WITH THE PLEDGES IMPLIED IN "THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE GROUP," AND BY THEM ACCEPTED.—K.H.

APPROVED. M.

Mary Anne Arundale, Francesca Arundale, Alfred J. Cooper-Oakley, H. Isabel Cooper-

Oakley, Archibald Keightley, Bertram Keightley, Isabel de Steiger, Laura E. Falkiner, Edmond W. Wade, R. Palmer Thomas, John Varley, Isabella Varley, Toni Schmiechen, Hermann Schmiechen, Mary C. D. Hamilton, Gerard B. Finch, Louisa S. Cook, Mabel Collins (Mrs. Keningale Cook), Catherine Galindo, Patience Sinnett, A. P. Sinnett, Jane Wade.

NOTE

This is one of the most striking documents now at Adyar. It consists of a Pledge to the Masters, written out by Miss F. Arundale, and signed by all those who made up the "Inner Group" of the London Lodge. But both the Masters M. and K. H., and also H.P.B., have written on the document. The part in the handwriting of Miss Arundale and the members' signatures is printed in small letters; that in the handwriting of H.P.B., in large letters; and that in the handwriting of the Masters, in large capitals. It will be noted that in the second paragraph the Master K. H. has added a phrase in parenthesis, as also after the addition by H.P.B. At the end of the Pledge in the handwriting of Miss Arundale, and before there begin the signatures of the members of the Group, there are in the document four vacant lines; in these vacant lines the message of the two Masters is written; hence the words "the undersigned" refers to the signatories of the Group whose names come below the handwriting of the Masters. Written across the statement of the Master K. H. there appears the one word "Approved" in the handwriting of the Master M., followed by His initial.

APPENDIX D[1]

I HAVE watched your many thoughts. I have watched their silent evolution and the yearnings of your inner soul ; and since your pledge permits me to do so, having a few things to tell you concerning yourself and those you love—I take the opportunity, one of the last there are to write to you directly, to say a few words. You know of course that once that H.P.B.'s aura in the house is exhausted you can have no more letters from me.

I want you to be acquainted with the situation as it now stands. Your loyalty to the cause entitles you to this.

First about your friend, L.H. Poor child ! By placing so constantly her personality over and above her inner and better Self—tho' she knows it not—she has done all she could for the last week to sever herself from us for ever. Yet so pure and genuine she is that I am

[1] Letter 20 in *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, First Series.

ready to leave a chink in the door she slams unconsciously to herself in her own face, and await for the entire awakening of that honest nature whenever that time comes. She is without artifice or malice ; entirely truthful and sincere, yet at times quite false to herself. As she says her ways are not *our* ways, nor can she comprehend them. Her personality coming in so strongly in her ideas of the fitness of things, she cannot certainly understand our acts on our plane of life. Tell her in all kindness, that if H.P.B. (as an example) was wrong last night—as she always is, from the Western point of view, in her everlasting natural impulses, apparently so rude and indelicate—she did it after all at her Master's direct order. She never stops one moment to consider the propriety of things when concerned in carrying out such orders. In the eyes of you, the civilised and cultured portion of mankind, it is the one unpardonable sin ; in our sight—*i.e.*, uncultured Asiatics—it is the greatest virtue ; for before it became with her a habit, she used to suffer in *her* Western nature and perform it as self-sacrifice of her personal reputation. But, if she was wrong, L. H. was not right either. She

allowed her womanly pride and personality—which were entirely out of question, at any rate out of H.P.B.'s thoughts—to get mixed up and prime in a question of pure rules and discipline . . . and . . . were more to be blamed than either of the two. You must remember that both have set themselves voluntarily apart from worldly society . . . for a specific object ; and to say nothing of the relative decency or indecency of any social custom of any country, there are rules of conduct controlling chelas which cannot be departed from in the slightest degree. I pray you, to use your influence with her, if you wish her good, to have her book published before the year 1885. Tell her also, since she has cut herself away from me, that she will have in good time the help of the Adept who writes stories with H.P.B. Yet since *novellettes* interest her more than metaphysics she has no need for the present of . . . 's help. He is certainly more wanted in London . . .

Having overheard your conversation with H.P.B. on the night of her arrival, I may say that you are right. To your aged mother, who has trodden with you in many stony paths of belief and experience since your childhood, you

owe a great duty. Not a blind and unjust obedience whose consequences may be most harmful to her as to yourself ; but a dutiful assiduity, and loving help to develop her spiritual intuitions and prepare her for the future. Many crosses and domestic sorrows have left their bleeding scars on her heart . . . She and you have earned happy rewards for your kindness to our messengers, and Karma will not forget them. But *look to the future ;* see to it that the continual performance of duty under the guidance of a well developed Intuition shall keep the balance well poised. Ah ! if your eyes were opened, you might see such a vista of potential blessings to yourselves and mankind lying in the germ of the present hour's effort, as would fire with joy and zeal your souls ! Strive towards the Light, all of you brave warriors for the Truth, but do not let selfishness penetrate into your ranks ; for it is unselfishness alone that throws open all the doors and windows of the inner Tabernacle and leaves them unshut.

To you personally, child, struggling thro' darkness to the Light, I would say, that the Path is *never* closed ; but in proportion to one's previous errors so is it harder to find and to tread. In

the eyes of the "Masters" no one is ever "utterly condemned". As the lost jewel may be recovered from the very depths of the tank's mud, so can the most abandoned snatch himself from the mire of sin, if only the precious Gem of Gems, the sparkling germ of the Atma, is developed. Each of us must do *that* for himself, each *can* if he but will and persevere. Good resolutions are mind-painted pictures of good *deeds*: fancies, day-dreams, whisperings of the *Buddhi* to the *Manas*. If we encourage them they will not fade away like the dissolving mirage in the Shamo desert, but grow stronger and stronger until one's whole life becomes the expression and outward proof of the divine motive within. Your acts in the past have been the natural fruit of an unworthy religious ideal, the result of ignorant misconception. They cannot be obliterated, for they are indelibly stamped upon the record of Karma, and neither tears nor repentance can blot the page. But you have the power to more than redeem and balance them by future acts. Around you are acquaintances, friends and associates—in, and outside, the T.S. who have committed the same and even more grievous faults, thro' the same

ignorance. Show them the dreadful consequences of it, point them to the Light, lead them to the Path, teach them, be a missionary of love and charity, thus in helping others win your own salvation. There are innumerable pages of your life record still to be written up, fair and blank they are as yet. Child of your race and of your age, seize the diamond pen and inscribe them with the history of noble deeds, days well-spent, years of holy striving. So will you win your way ever upward to the higher planes of spiritual consciousness. Fear not, faint not, be faithful to the ideal you can now dimly see. You have much to unlearn. The narrow prejudices of your people bind you more than you suspect. They make you intolerant, as last night, of the petty offences of others against your artificial standards of propriety, and disposed to lose sight of essentials. You are not yet able to appreciate the difference between inner purity and "outer *culture*". Were the "Masters" to judge *you* by your own social canons, where would you stand? The very Society whose hypocritical rules of propriety you stand for so vehemently, is a festering mass of brutishness within a shell of decency. From their ignorant

and malevolent intolerance you appeal to us, because your intuition tells you that they will not accord you justice. Learn then to look at men below the surface, and to neither condemn nor trust on appearances. Try, child. HOPE, and accept my blessing.

K. H.

APPENDIX E

Adyar, 24/11/85

DEAREST TERESA,

Read the enclosure, that you may have the truth once and for all about H. P. B's finances, show it to Mohini, and to anybody else if absolutely necessary, and then forward it to Bavaji in such a way *that he will get it.* And please do not let H. P. B. know that you have seen it. The tone of the three notes from yourself and the two boys, sent me under your this week's cover to Leadbeater, showed me that you ought to be told the exact truth about this matter. H. P. B. writes to Elberfeld that I leave her to starve, and evidently the same stupid nonsense has been told to the Solovioff and others. If there's any starving at all, it's we who are doing it—Oakley, L. and myself—so as to keep the expenses within the narrowest limits and help the T. S. get ahead. The

whole running expense of Headquarters—food, servants, 2 horses, 2 oxen, and a cart are not within Rs. 50 per mensem as much as I send H. P. B. That's the plain truth, and it is really most unkind for her to shame us so.

Lovingly yours,

H.S.O.

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